



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/778,030	02/06/2001	Ingo Hermann	H-205706	6204

7590 03/23/2004
LAWRENCE B. PLANT
General Motors Corporation
Legal Staff, Mail Code 482-C23-B21
P.O. Box 300
Detroit, MI 48265-3000

EXAMINER

BASICHAS, ALFRED

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
----------	--------------

3749

DATE MAILED: 03/23/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/778,030

Applicant(s)

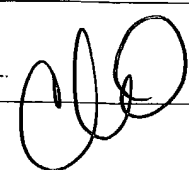
HERMANN ET AL.

Examiner

Alfred Basichas

Art Unit

3749



-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 06 February 2001.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-16 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-16 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 06 February 2001 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 05.07.10-2001.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Objections

1. Claims 1-16 are objected to because of the following informalities: The term "characterized in that" should be changed to comprising or wherein, so as to comply with accepted U.S. patent practice. Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

2. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

3. Claims 15 and 16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. The claims are vague and indefinite as to the scope, as it is not clear whether the claims are dependent or independent. Further, if the claims are independent, the scope remains vague and indefinite as to the scope, as it is not clear whether the subject matter of the claim referred to in the rejected claims is being positively recited.
4. Claims 15-16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. The claims are generally narrative and indefinite,

Art Unit: 3749

failing to conform with current U.S. practice. They appear to be a literal translation into English from a foreign document.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

5. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Art Unit: 3749

6. Claims 1 and 6-8, as understood, are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Yabe (5,297,620), which shows all of the claimed limitations. Yabe shows a burner arrangement for the combustion of a fuel gas/oxygen mixture, including a body permeable for the mixture whose surface regions defining the free cross section of flow are covered with an oxidation catalyst (paragraph 9), by a feeder device 1,2 arranged on an intake side of the body.

7. Claims 1-8, as understood, are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Michel (4,406,611), which shows all of the claimed limitations. Michel shows a burner arrangement for the combustion of a fuel gas/oxygen mixture, including a body permeable for the mixture whose surface regions defining the free cross section of flow are covered with an oxidation catalyst 53, by a feeder device 63 arranged on an intake side of the body, and an electronic igniter 72 downstream of the catalyst.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

8. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

9. The factual inquiries set forth in *Graham v. John Deere Co.*, 383 U.S. 1, 148 USPQ 459 (1966), that are applied for establishing a background for determining obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are summarized as follows:

Art Unit: 3749

1. Determining the scope and contents of the prior art.
2. Ascertaining the differences between the prior art and the claims at issue.
3. Resolving the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art.
4. Considering objective evidence present in the application indicating obviousness or nonobviousness.

10. This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

11. Claim 2, as understood, is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yabe (5,297,620) in view of Fleming (4,643,667). Yabe disclosed substantially all of the claimed limitations, but does not specifically recite that the catalyst be only a layer remote from the inlet. Fleming teaches such an arrangement, in which the first layer near the inlet is non-catalytic, specifically for the purpose of reducing flashback (paragraph 24). Accordingly, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to have incorporated the arrangement of Fleming into the invention disclosed by Yabe, so as to further enhance flashback reduction.

12. Claims 11-14, as understood, are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yabe (5,297,620), which shows substantially all of the claimed

Art Unit: 3749

limitations. Yabe does not specifically recite the material utilized for the permeable mass. Official Notice is given that the various claimed manifestations of the permeable mass are all old and well known in the art. This is further supported by applicants claiming of almost all of the various forms, and indicates that this subject matter is lacking any criticality. Accordingly, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to have incorporated the claimed permeable mass into the invention disclosed by Yabe, so as to provide for an effective permeable mass to carry the catalyst.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Alfred Basichas whose telephone number is 703 306 3476. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday during regular business hours.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Ira Lazarus can be reached on 703 308 1935. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are 703 872 9306.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703 308 0861.

Application/Control Number: 09/778,030

Page 7

Art Unit: 3749

March 19, 2004


Alfred Basicas
Primary Examiner
703 306 3476